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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION  
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NEWSLETTER TOPICS

This issue of Newsletter Topics is devoted entirely to examples of newsletter features from various parts of the country. They were selected because they show what can be done with subjects at hand when the newsletter staff makes a real attempt to produce a publication that has local reader appeal.

For Prospective Members Only

Last Spring we had a waiting list of nearly five hundred persons; today, notwithstanding we have done our darrest to catch up, we are still over six hundred behind. Last Spring we placed orders for \$200,000 worth of line material and later for \$500,000 worth more. If it all had been shipped to us, paying for it would have bankrupted us and the Lord only knows where we could have stored it. From this multiplicity of orders we are receiving a mere trickle of material--only a fraction of our need. It seems there is, always, a shortage of one article or another. If it isn't transformers it is hardware; if it isn't hardware, it is poles, or line wire or meters or insulators or the Lord knows what, and above all, the constant menace of a break down in our power supply.

But even if we are so fortunate as to secure a sufficient supply of material, we would be unable to hook up prospective members as rapidly as we would like. We have only three gangs of men we can use for that purpose and their primary function is the maintenance of our existing lines and so much repair work is urgently needed that a large part of their time has to be devoted to that purpose. Additional gangs can not be recruited at a moment's notice. Linemen, unlike poets, are made not just born; and it takes considerable time to train a man to handle a hot wire at the top of a forty-foot pole in such weather as we have been having at this time, without danger to himself and others.

We endeavor to connect prospective members to the high line in chronological order, unless there is good--and we mean good--reason for doing otherwise.

Please do not have a fit if your neighbor's house is hooked up before yours, even if yours was inspected first. There may have been and doubtless are good and sufficient reasons for so doing. Of one thing you may be assured, the Directors will have shown no partiality. They have learned by bitter experience the truth of the old Roman adage, "Frustra laborat qui omnibus placere studet". He labors in vain who tries to please everyone. Don't complain if some one is hooked up who was inspected after you were; instead, rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for it proves that your time is close at hand.



Now for the sixty-four dollar question: "How long do I have to wait before I can receive current?" Candidly, we do not know. Judging from our experience of the last six months, we are hoping to have all those we now have on our list connected before next Christmas. We are hoping and praying that a miracle will happen, and material may once again become plentiful; if so, we shall at once secure a contractor and connect all of you as soon as it can be done. Help us pray.--Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Incorporated, Waldorf, Maryland.

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#### Barn Cleaner to be Demonstrated.

At least one Delaware County farmer has found the answer to a problem which, we will wager, has caused more serious thought and figuring than any other around our dairy barns.

Surely everyone who has ever handled a shovel and a fork from the vantage point of the gutter behind a row of cows has schemed and dreamed of the day when he could push a button and have the stuff loaded in the spreader. Presto! Change!

Alex Rabeler of Bovina Center has in actual operation on his farm the newest and latest labor saving device we have seen. It is an endless chain gutter cleaner which in 12 minutes flat will clean the gutters back of 40 cows. The cost of power to drive the equipment will be slightly under 2¢ a day with power at 2¢ per KWH. The only cost to consider is the initial investment and if farm labor costs stay anywhere near what they are now, the hours saved will soon take care of that.

On April 3, at 1:30 P.M., this equipment will be demonstrated at the Rabeler Farm. County Farm Bureau Agent Denton, as well as factory representatives from the company which makes the barn cleaner, will be there to answer your questions about this equipment.

Alex also has the only barn hay-dryer on the Co-op line so some of you will want to see that, too.

We are looking forward to seeing you at Rabeler's on the 3rd. Bring Junior and the hired man, too. They will look at the future of dairying in an entirely different light after they have seen this demonstration.--Delaware County Electric Co-op, Delhi, New York.

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#### Number "1700"

On February 12th, we connected member number 1700 to our system. This is the day that the Leo Granica family living on a farm three miles west of Glenwood City had reason to rejoice for they too have been waiting for a long, long time, since a wireman finished wiring their buildings, which was on a March 20, 1946.

At the present we have a backlog of 98 farmsteads wired and waiting for connection, the oldest since April 15, 1946, and the youngest



since February 25, 1947. During the year 1946, we brought service to 168 new members. We expect to do as well or better this year, providing we are able to get the required material. But there is the rub. So far this year we have added 26 more. The material situation is getting more critical day by day; it is more serious now than it ever has been since we started back in November of 1938, with the exception of poles. Line poles which were the bottle-neck in 1945 are plentiful now. Transformers are hard to get, and line conductor, or wire, both bare and covered seem to have faded off the market. What little we are able to get is on orders that in most instances were placed back in 1945.--St. Croix County Electric Cooperative Incorporated, Baldwin, Wisconsin.

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### Hunter's Trouble

As this article is being written, we have just gotten through viewing a broken insulator on one of our oil circuit breakers which controlled outages on lines South of Ft. Recovery. This insulator had definitely been broken by rifle shot. It had been hanging on the line causing trouble for some time and finally put some 30 miles of line out of commission, adding to our storm trouble. I presume this was done by boys who could find no other mark to shoot as it would be inconceivable that a grownup person would do such a thing. Recently, on a nearby project, boys with rifles were picked up shooting insulators and were severely handled by the law. If any of our members observe this kind of vandalism, they should report it at once as service is too important to let those things go by unnoticed. Parents should see to it that their sons are cautioned against doing such things as are above mentioned.--Midwest Electric Incorporated, St. Marys, Ohio.

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### Ward's Chapel Church

In August, 1938, electricity was brought to Ward's Chapel Church, which is 120 years old and the oldest church still standing in Nottoway County.

Miss Sarah Farmer who is secretary-treasurer of Ward's Chapel Sunday School, in a letter to the Cooperative, describes the activities here in the following paragraph:

"The Sunday School rooms at this Church serve in many ways as a Community Center. AAA and other agricultural meetings have been held here, suppers have been held for organizations, such as the Kiwanis Club, oyster suppers are held by the Womens' Society of Christian Service, and it is used for various other uses. Electricity has added greatly to the enjoyment we derive from our church building."--Southside Electric Cooperative, Crewe, Virginia.

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### Among Co-op Members:

Recently Mr. R. D. Woodward, Sr., telephoned us to say that one of our poles was burning. We feel sure that Mr. Woodward was only too glad to give that much of his time for the protection of valuable property, though it probably interrupted his work to go to the house and make the call. Yet many of you do not know that by this courtesy, you were saved the inconvenience of being without electricity for perhaps several hours. This might have resulted in more of a loss to you than merely the inconvenience of being without lights. To the Co-op it would have been a line down and a pole to be replaced, with all the expenses of labor and materials involved. We appreciate this act of Mr. Woodward's and similar acts of other members, which have helped your Co-op linemen to keep the electricity reaching you with as few interruptions as possible.--Talquin Electric Cooperative, Incorporated, Quincy, Florida.

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### For Boys Only

From time to time we have to "retire a meter from stock," that is to say we junk it. Mostly these meters have been hit by lightning. However, the junk man will pay us nothing for the old meter since they say it costs more to take it apart than the few cents worth of old metal it contains.

Now a boy can get a lot of good out of taking one of these old meters apart. Each one contains a magnet, gears, wheels and a lot of fine wire.

If you are a boy and want one of these meters, write us a good letter about yourself and why you would like one of these meters (free). If we can't take care of you immediately we will as soon as we get another one and your turn comes up. Such things are important.--Hancock-Wood Electric Co-operative, North Baltimore, Ohio.

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### Does A Meter Lie?

Yes! But, 99-50/100% of the time it is in the consumer's favor. Why? Because they are similar to a watch--after a number of years of usage, they slow down from dirt and wear in the jewels and bearings.

About the only thing that will make it run fast is a short or ground caused by lightning, or a surge of high voltage--which very seldom happens.

Out of 100 meters tested after being in service two years, one was found to be 2% fast; 73 were correct to 3% slow; 25 were 3.1% to 5% slow; and 1 was 8% slow--usually the fast meters are found to be from the liberal use of appliances and lights, yet one does not realize the KWH used over a 30-day period. --Douglas Electric Cooperative, Incorporated, Roseburg, Oregon.

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Operating Report

|                   | February 1947 | February 1946 | February 1945 |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Billed Consumers  | 1,210         | 1,126         | 1,058         |
| Total KWH Sold    | 203,660       | 152,968       | 116,365       |
| Ave. Consumption  | 168.3         | 135.9         | 110           |
| Total Billing     | 9,165.55      | 7,802.84      | 6,589.63      |
| Average Bill      | 7.57          | 6.93          | 6.23          |
| No. Minimum Bills | 106           | 108           | 137           |
| Late Payments     | 44            | 43            | 34            |
| Miles of Line     | 532.3         | 505.5         | 485.6         |

There are some things on this Operating Report that go up and some things that keep going down and some go up and down. You will notice that average consumption going up by the year, but it goes up and down by the month. The billed consumers just go up all the time and so do the miles of line. We wish we could keep the number of late payments going down all the time, but they just seem to keep going up instead-- O'Brien County Rural Electric Cooperative, Primghar, Iowa.

Project Paragraphs

Did someone say that REA Co-ops are tax exempt? Taxes paid by your Co-op last year amounted to \$8,530.75 and included stock certificate tax, corporation franchise tax, sales tax on material and consumers service bills, Federal unemployment tax, social security tax, property tax, withholding tax and State unemployment tax.--Laclede Electric Cooperative, Lebanon, Missouri.



